

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00  
INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 ACDA-07 BIB-01  
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R 091400Z SEP 77  
FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1845  
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
DIA WASH DC  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
USMISSION NATO  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 2005

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MILI, FI, UR, MPOL  
SUBJECT: FRG SHIP VISIT DRAWS COMMUNIST CRITICISM

REF: HELSINKI A-90 (MOTAL)

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. SOVIET PRESS CRITICISM OF "NATO'S  
SPREADING MILITARY PRESENCE" PROVIDED THE FOCUS OF ATTENTION  
FOR THE FIRST FRG NAVAL SHIP VISIT TO FINLAND, SEPTEMBER 5-8.  
THE SHIPS--THREE MINESWEEPERS AND A SUBMARINE TENDER--  
WERE RETURNING A CALL MADE LAST YEAR BY A FINNISH NAVY VESSEL  
TO KIEL.

2. A SEPTEMBER 4 ARTICLE IN PRAVDA'S WEEKLY PRESS REVIEW  
REPORTEDLY OBSERVED THAT "AT THE SAME TIME AS ONE PART  
OF THE WEST GERMAN NAVY PARTICIPATES IN NATO MANEUVERS,  
ANOTHER PART INTENDS TO VISIT FINNISH HARBORS. IT IS  
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THE FIRST TIME DURING THE POSTWAR DECADES THAT IT  
DARES TO SAIL SO FAR INTO THE INNER PARTS OF THE  
BALTIC. THIS CAN'T HAVE OTHER CONSEQUENCES THAN  
TO MAKE THE PEACE-LOVING FORCES OF EUROPE VIGILANT."  
THE FINNISH COMMUNIST PRESS REPLAYED THE ARTICLE AND  
CRITICIZED THE VISIT EDITORIALY. KANSAN UUTiset IN  
A SEPTEMBER 6 EDITORIAL POINTED OUT THAT PRESIDENT

KEKKONEN HAD EARLIER CALLED ATTENTION TO THE THREAT TO NORTHERN EUROPE'S SECURITY POSED BY GROWING WEST GERMAN MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE AREA. THE EDITORIAL QUESTIONED THE "PECULIAR COINCIDENCE" THAT THE VISIT OCCURRED WHILE KEKKONEN WAS VISITING GDR AND WONDERED WHETHER THE FINNISH NAVY OR THE FINNISH MFA WAS RESPONSIBLE.

3. THE NON-COMMUNIST PRESS REJECTED SOVIET AND COMMUNIST INSINUATIONS. LEADING HELSINGIN SANOMAT NOTED EDITORIALY SEPTEMBER 6 THAT WEST GERMANY IS NOT A MAJOR NAVAL POWER AND CANNOT BE CONSIDERED TO BE THREATENING ANYONE, ALTHOUGH IT "HAS REINFORCED ITS RELATIVE STRENGTH IN NATO, WHICH MAY GIVE CAUSE FOR CONCERN, BUT THAT IS ANOTHER MATTER." THE EDITORIAL SAW THE VISIT AS A NORMAL COURTESY CALL BY A FELLOW BALTIC COASTAL STATE. THE PRESS NOTED THAT WEST GERMAN NAVY HAD PREVIOUSLY CALLED AT POLAND.

4. HELSINGIN SANOMAT OBSERVED THAT THE LATEST PRAVDA ARTICLE CAME IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTINUING CRITICISM OF FRG MILITARISM AND FINNISH MILITARY CONTACTS WITH THE WEST, INCLUDING AN ARTICLE IN KRAZNAYA ZVEZDA ON THE JUNE VISIT TO FINLAND OF GENERAL BROWN. HELSINGIN SANOMAT MENTIONED THAT SOVIET PRESS ATTENTION TO NATO ACTIVITIES

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IN NORTHERN EUROPE INCLUDED A RECENT PRAVDA REPRINT OF A KANSAN UUTISET EDITORIAL ON THE SUBJECT AND AN IZVESTIA ARTICLE ON FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE CONCERN OVER DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTHERN EUROPE.

5. GOF OFFICIALS WERE CAREFUL NOT TO DISCUSS SOVIET COMMENTS PUBLICLY, AND THE VISIT ITSELF GENERATED LITTLE ADDITIONAL PUBLICITY. POLICE AT ONE POINT CONFISCATED LEAFLETS BEING DISTRIBUTED BY FINNISH PEACE DEFENDERS TO PEOPLE VISITING THE SHIPS, BUT THE LEAFLETS WERE RETURNED AFTER POLICE LEARNED THE PEACE DEFENDERS HAD RECEIVED PROPER PERMISSION TO HAND THEM OUT. END UNCLASSIFIED.

6. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: CRITICISM BY SOVIET AND FINNISH COMMUNIST PRESS OF THE FRG SHIP VISIT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN OF SIMILAR NATURE TO THAT SURROUNDING VISITS OF GENERAL BROWN AND FRENCH MOD BOURGES (REFAIR). IT IS LIKELY THAT THE US NAVAL VISIT PROJECTED FOR EARLY NOVEMBER WILL BE THE OBJECT OF SIMILAR ATTENTION BY THE COMMUNIST PRESS AND THE PEACE DEFENDERS, WHO STAGED A SMALL DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE BROWN VISIT.

HOWEVER, THE FINNS APPARENTLY INTEND TO TAKE SUCH  
CRITICISM IN STRIDE WHILE MAINTAINING NORMAL  
LIMITED CONTACTS WITH THE WEST IN THE MILITARY FIELD.  
RIDGWAY

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